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autumn coloring of the screen. The line tangle on the right, of magnolia, carnations, river, and grasses, though simpler than the corn screen, rises in grandeur of pure spacing to Phidias, Godoshi, and Seshu. The aesthetic purity and loftiness of both line and color come out in perfect combination."

S. C. B. R.

## TWO PAINTINGS BY PUVIS DE CHAVANNES

THE excellent representation in the Museum of the work of Puvis de Chavannes, consisting of five examples, has been further augmented by two noble paintings, *The Balloon*, and *The Carrier Pigeon*. These, received as a loan from Mrs. James R. Jesup, have been placed on the south wall of Gallery 25.

These pictures were painted during the siege of Paris in 1870 and '71, and represent the means of outside communication left to the beleaguered city. They are companion pieces executed in a brown monochrome in which, however, owing to the choice of shades the effect of the colors in nature is suggested. The masses in each picture are carefully balanced, and the lines contrasted, so that one complements the design of the other. Each panel contains a single figure, inspired apparently from the same model, and her costume in both cases is the same, a black gown fitting tightly about the body and arms, with a long and ample skirt falling in folds about the feet.

In *The Balloon* the woman, standing on the ramparts, is holding a musket in one hand and raising the other toward a balloon which floats high overhead. Before her, beyond the fortifications, stretches a plain with Mt. Valérien in the distance. The inscription on the frame, composed by the artist, reads, "*La ville de Paris investié confie à l'air son appel à la France*"—The invested city of Paris trusts to the air her call to France.

In the other picture the woman stands on a roof in the midst of Paris, on the eastern end of the Louvre, one would say, or St. Germain l'Auxerrois. She clasps a carrier

pigeon to her breast and wards off an eagle that is pursuing it. It is winter and the snow has fallen. The background is the Island of the City, with Notre Dame, the Sainte Chapelle, the Conciergerie, and the Pont Neuf, and beyond, the mountain of Sainte Geneviève with the Panthéon on its summit. On the frame is printed, "*Échappé à la serre ennemie le message attendu exalte le coeur de la fière cité*"—Escaping from the enemy's talons, the expected message exalts the heart of the proud city.

An interesting comment on the painting occurs in Théophile Gautier's *Tableaux de Siège*—Paris, 1870-71. The translation of the passage is as follows: "A woman dressed in black was passing, a balloon was floating through the air, a fort was throwing shells at the Prussians, and out of these facts, with no relation one to the other and with no significance, results a delicious and sensitive composition and a tender poetry."

"Monsieur Puvis de Chavannes brought back from the ramparts a superb design which he afterwards had lithographed and which recalled the grand and simple manner of the artist to whom are due those magnificent frescoes on canvas: *War, Peace, Work, and Rest*.

"A slender and graceful woman in a long gown of mourning, her hair arranged like a widow's, the right hand resting on a musket to which the bayonet is attached, with the left stretched toward the sky, her face less than profile, stands on the platform of a bastion. The folds of her black gown break about her feet like the sharp folds of Gothic drapery, giving the look of a pedestal which sets off and adds to her elegance.

"A little below her one sees cannons, tents, gabionnades, pyramids of bullets; from a fort, its silhouette recognizable as Mont Valérien, escape horizontal streaks of smoke. In a corner in the sky, already blurred by distance, is fading away the sphere of a balloon, the only means of communication with the outside world which is left to us.

"The symbolical figure, that might be real and represent a portrait as well as a generalization, follows the balloon with a

look of inquietude and love. On this frail craft a great hope is loaded.

"This touching figure calls up her companion, 'Paris pressing to her heart the carrier pigeon which brings good news.' To give to her the correct expression, M. Puvis de Chavannes has but to think of Mademoiselle Favart reciting *The Pigeons of the Republic* in her gown lusted like the plumage of a turtle dove. It will be his distraction when next he is on guard to see our feathered postmen passing in the air pursued but not caught by the falcons of Monsieur Bismarck."

The pictures were sent to America in 1873 or '74 as gifts to a lottery which was organized to help the sufferers from the Chicago fire, and until recently were lost sight of, though they were well known through reproductions. It is opportune that they should come to light at this time when the spirit that inspired them is again so splendidly manifest. B. B.

### THE LATE THEODORE M. DAVIS'S EXCAVATIONS AT THEBES IN 1912-13<sup>1</sup>

#### I. THE EXCAVATION OF THE REAR CORRIDORS AND SEPULCHRAL CHAMBER OF THE TOMB OF KING SIPHTAH

THE Tomb of Siphtah was discovered by Mr. Davis, assisted by the late Edward R. Ayrton, in 1905 and their Report published in 1908.

<sup>1</sup>Through the friendly interest of Mr. Davis, our Museum received as gifts during his lifetime many objects of great historical and archaeological importance from the excavations which he conducted for some twelve years at Thebes. This was the case particularly in the years 1912 and 1913 when he cleared the Sepulchral Chamber of the Tomb of Siphtah, in the Valley of the Kings, and excavated near the great Mortuary-Temple of Rameses III, at Medinet Habu. In order to give to readers of the BULLETIN a description of these excavations which yielded important objects now in our Egyptian collection, Mr. Henry Burton, who was in charge of Mr. Davis's excavations at the time and is now a member of the Museum's Egyptian Expedition, has contributed an account of the work at both places. The first of his articles follows; the second will appear in a later number of the BULLETIN.

